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REVEREND JAMES MOIR, EDGECOMBE CHANGES HER COUNTY SEAT, AND GERMANTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA.

BY

GASTON LICHTENSTEIN

REPRINTED FROM THE TARBOROUGH SOUTHERNER

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When Tarboro Was Incorporated

THE FIRST COMMISSIONERS AND SOME OF THEIR DESCENDANTS

Many silent lessons may be acquired from one page of an old book.

When I first learned that there was in the possession of the Register of Deeds of Edgecombe a plat of the town of Tarboro, as originally "laid off" in 1760, I did not lose much time in making a special note of it. A number of visits were then paid to the vault where the records are kept and a careful study was made of page 524, Book D., which contains the Plan just referred to, with the lots, streets, bounds, common, etc., as laid out by order of the Rev. James Moir, Lawrence Toole, great-great-great grandfather of the present Editor of the Southerner, Aquilla Sugg, Elisha Battle, and Benjamin Hart, its first Commissioners.

Anyone, who examines this Plan must give considerable allowance for educational deficiencies, to-wit: Lawrence is spelled Lawrance, Hart is written Heart, Moire instead of Moir, lotts for lots, and commons for common; but in simply stating that similar errors occur frequently in recording the Deeds of Edgecombe of this period, I desire to call attention to the fact that the Colonial Records are peppered with mistakes in spelling. Although orthographers were few, the inhabitants possessed good sense, and after all, the state of the Province required rather men of sound judgment than erudite College graduates.

My article on the Town Common noted the fact of the incorporation being bounded on three sides by public land. To be explicit, the Common included all the town property along the river bank, also the land contiguous to Holly's or Hendrick's Creek, and the present Common, beyond which looking toward the depot was 'in the country.'

Main Street, as we know it today, was intended to be residential. The founders evidently expected business to be conducted on Trade Street, whence the name.

There were one hundred and twenty-one lots, of half an acre each, the names of the owners being given on the opposite page to that containing the Plan. Each lot is numbered and the interested individual can thus easily learn the original owner.

Often have I wondered why the streets of Tarboro were named after the saints. One of the silent lessons, acquired from carefully studying the plat, has thrown an abundance of light on the subject.

Considering the character of two, at least, of the first Board of Aldermen, I feel safe in saying that sacred nomenclature would appeal strongly to Rev. James Moir and Elisha Battle.

Running parallel with Holly's or Hendrick's Creek, there were six streets: Creek, through which the Atlantic Coast Line now runs, Trade, St. George, now called Main, St. Andrew, St. Patrick, and St. David.

As the Province of North Carolina belonged to England, it was natural to look back upon Great Britain and Ireland for names. Therefore, a light flashed across my mind when I saw that Main Street was designated as St. George.

I said to myself, "Here they are in order one after other: St. George, first, the patron saint of England, St. Andrew, second, the patron saint of Scotland, St. Patrick, third, the patron of Ireland, and St. David, fourth, of little Wales."

The five crosstown streets between the Tar and the present Common were named as we know them in 1909: Granville, Pitt, St. James, Church and St. John.

It was natural for the Commissioners to honor Lord Granville, who owned such a big portion of the Colony.

But the most timely and appropriate name given was Pitt, for the Great Commoner who one year before had attained a position of extraordinary influence on account of the English victories by land and sea. In 1759 Pitt succeeded in choosing men who were unusually successful in every part of the globe where Frenchmen could be found.

During this year, when William Pitt, the Elder, was at the zenith of his power, his son, destined to be a great man like himself, was born; Wolfe took Quebec and consequently Canada; at Minden, in Westphalia, the Anglo-Hanoverian forces defeated the French; and Hawks crushed the French fleet off Brest.

Therefore, when Tarboro was incorporated in 1760, William

Pitt probably occupied a bigger place in the minds of the inhabitants of the Province than any man in the civilized world.

Mere mention of the Court of St. James causes one to think of England and, although the palace of St. James is no longer occupied by the sovereign, it gives its name officially to the British court.

In naming St. James Street the loyal subjects looked upward but, in the case of St. John, they chose the appellation of John the Baptist, who from an early date was regarded in the Mother Country as the patron saint of the common people.

Rev. James Moir, sent out from England by the Society for The Propagation of The Gospel, was not a native American. He spent a number of years in the southern part of the Province before coming to Edgecombe county. According to Clement Hall, a brother missionary, James Moir began his work in Edgecombe Parish about Easter, 1747.

Governor Gabriel Johnston, a man unpopular with the inhabitants of the Colony as he was unpractical and tried to mould affairs the way he wanted them, said that Mr. Moir left the southern part of the Province without asking leave of anybody.

If his Excellency had taken the trouble to inquire, he would have learned that the unfortunate Missionary had complained of the unsatisfactory conditions in the District as far back as 1742.

After preaching more than four years without proper assistance, he wrote to the Secretary of the Society and told him that his health was such that he felt the need of going to a colder climate and higher land.

Without entering into the mass of data wherein the ungodly condition of the people in the Cape Fear District is set forth, it is enough to state that the Secretary of the Society wrote to Gov. Johnston about the difficulties under which Mr. Moir labored.

Whether the Missionary came to Edgecombe with or without permission, he had resided there thirteen years when Tarboro was incorporated and the fact of his being chosen one of the first Commissioners shows that the people thought something of him.

Lawrence Toole married Sabra Irwin, a sister of Henry Irwin, the Tarboro merchant who during the Revolution sacrificed himself for his country.

Henry Irwin Toole, the first, son of the Commissioner and Sabra Irwin, like his Uncle Henry Irwin also received a commission in

the Continental regular army. He died early in life but successfully served his term of enlistment, after which he returned to Tarboro and entered the mercantile business.

He left three children: Henry Irwin Toole, the second; Arabella, and Mary.

Henry Irwin Toole, the second, married Ann Blount, daughter of Gov. William Blount, of Tennessee. His children were Henry Irwin Toole, the third, and Mary Eliza, who married Dr. Josiah Lawrence.

Arabella Toole, the granddaughter of the Commissioner and sister of Henry Irwin Toole, second, married the Hon. James West Clark, whose house stood at the corner of Church and St. Patrick streets, on the site now occupied by the residence of his grandson, John W. Cotten.

James West Clark is buried in Calvary churchyard near his son, Henry Toole Clark.

The descendants of Edgecombe's war Governor, Henry Toole Clark, are too well known to be given here.

Mary Toole, sister of Henry Irwin Toole, the second, and Arabella Toole married Theophilus Parker and had six children: Rev. John Haywood Parker; Catherine C., married first John Hargrave and second Rev. Robert B. Drane; Elizabeth T., married Rev. Jos. Blount Cheshire, father of the present bishop; Mary W. married first Frank Hargrave and second Governor Henry Toole Clark; Col. Francis M. Parker, and Arabella C., whom so many of us know affectionately.

Miss Bella Parker is probably the oldest native of Tarboro alive today and the writer fervently hopes that God will spare her for many years to come.

Elisha Battle, one of the original Commissioners of the town of Tarboro was the progenitor of the vast family in North Carolina that bears his name. Dr. Kemp P. Battle credits him with over two thousand descendants.

He was born in Nansemond County, Virginia, January 9, 1723, and at the age of twenty-five moved to Edgecombe. The attractive terms offered by the agents of Lord Granville perhaps was the cause that induced the young man to purchase the rich bottom lands along Tar River. With him came his wife, Elizabeth Sumner, first cousin of General Jethro Sumner of Revolutionary fame and their two children. Part of his descendants still own the land

he bought. However, it is well to add that he constantly purchased attractive offerings in other parts of the county.

About the year 1764, Elisha Battle joined the Baptist Church at the Falls of Tar River and continued in full fellowship. He served for twenty-eight years as Deacon until he resigned on account of age. He sometimes acted as moderator at the Associations which he usually attended and was known to be a remarkably pious, zealous member, always plain and candid in censuring and reproving vice or folly in all their shapes.

About 1756 he was appointed a Justice of the Peace and continued in that office until 1795, when he resigned.

Simply to recount the many capacities in which he served the County and Commonwealth would be enough to demonstrate the exceptional usefulness of Elisha Battle, as a statesman.

He was chosen to represent Edgecombe in the General Assembly, being elected the first time in 1771, and continued to serve for twenty years when he was compelled to resign on account of his advanced state in life.

Before a permanent seat of government for the State was selected, the General Assembly used to ballot at each session for the next temporary capital.

It was probably due to the influence of Elisha Battle, who took a prominent part in the deliberations at Fayetteville in 1786, that the Senate decided to select Tarboro as its next place of meeting.

Accordingly, the General Assembly met "at Tarborough on the nineteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand, seven hundred and Eighty-seven and, of the Sovereignty and Independence of the said State the Twelfth, it being the first session of this Assembly."

As evidence of the nomadic character of the legislators, I shall reproduce from the State Records (*) a Resolution passed Tuesday, Dec. 18th, 1787:

"That Harry Jones of Edgecombe County, be allowed the sum of fifteen pounds for carrying a Copy of the Journal of last Assembly to the public printer at Fayetteville, and carting from thence to Tarborough the papers of the Senate; that the Treasurer pay him the same and be allowed."

Not only was Elisha Battle a Justice of the Peace and Legislator during the stormy Revolutionary period but he attended almost all

*Vol. XX., page 438.

the State Conventions, being a delegate to the State Congress of April 1776, which authorized the North Carolina members of the Continental Congress to vote for independence, also a member of the State Congress that met at Halifax in November and December of the same year, which adopted the Declaration of Rights and Constitution.

When the Convention of 1788 met for deliberation of the Federal Constitution, the body showed its appreciation of his worth by appointing him chairman of the Committee of the Whole.

The latter part of his life was spent in quietude.

From a work entitled, A Concise History of the Kehukee Baptist Association, by Elders Lemuel Burkitt and Jesse Read, printed by A. Hodge at Halifax, 1803, I shall quote the following:

"In 1799 he requested his youngest son to come and take possession of the land and plantation whereon he lived (which he had before made him a deed for) that he might give up the care of a family and live with him. About this time he desired his children to meet him so that he might have private discourse with them and concluded to have his will written and execute it, although he had for many years kept a written one by him, altering it when he found it necessary. He divided his property among his children, only reserving a sum of money and notes, as security for himself. Soon after he was taken more unwell than usual. Without the least doubt of future felicity," he passed away the 6th of Mar. 1799, preceding George Washington, his great chieftain, by only nine months.

Jacob, the youngest son of Elisha Battle, who was called by his father, shortly before his death to come and take possession of the plantation, lived on the Cool Spring Farm, about half a mile from his father's residence, at a settlement called Old Town.

At this settlement was born James Smith Battle, his son, who possessed the distinction of adding to his inherited estate so many thousands of acres that he was able to ride from the present town limits of Rocky Mount to Tarboro almost without having to leave his own land.

His vast holdings were divided among his children.

William Smith Battle, Edgecombe's Grand Old Man, is a son of James Smith Battle and, consequently, the great grandson of Elisha Battle.

He was born October 4th 1823, and attended the Stoney Hill and Louisburg Academies. He entered the university in 1840 and graduated in 1844, being well liked and noted for his manly bearing and perfect truthfulness.

At an early age he married Elizabeth M., daughter of Francis L. Dancy, the wedding taking place on July 25th, 1845.

When his father purchased the Rocky Mount Cotton Mills, one of the first factories in the State, he turned over the management to young William, who gave up his turpentine business in which he was extensively engaged.

The son however, possessed a great deal of energy because he not only continued to plant cotton but also became manager and part owner of the Rocky Mount flour and grist mill.

Several fires, seven of which took place within two years at the Falls, and on different plantations, caused a loss of at least sixty thousand dollars above insurance.

He rebuilt both his cotton and grist mills at great expense and was on the road to success when the panic of 1873 occurred. His failure was due to low prices for manufactured products and the expense of rebuilding when materials and the rate of interest were high.

As if this were not enough, he has been afflicted with frightful loss in his family. A visit to the Battle section in the Episcopal churchyard, where his only daughter and several sons lie buried, shows mutely how heavily the hand of the Almighty has fallen upon him.

The manner in which he has borne his losses is well told by Dr. Kemp P. Battle, who writes:

"He attributed his losses to accident or the act of God. No one has ever heard him complain with bitterness of the hardness of fortune. The same high-toned, equable, kindly temper, the same tenderness of soul, which characterized him in his prosperous days, he retains when his energies are confined to a smalled area and when he is dealing with lesser interests."

William S. Battle has been little in public life. He has served as a justice of the peace and a member of the special committee which presided in the County Court.

He was a member of the Secession Convention that met in 1861. During the Civil War he gave liberally of his means to the Cause.

Today he stands for the Old School and is one of the few left to remind us of Southern civilization as it existed in the ante-bellum period.

Reverend James Moir

AND CONTEMPORANEOUS COLONIAL HISTORY

Among the clergymen sent out by the Church of England to preach the Gospel to the people of Colonial North Carolina was James Moir who occupied for many years the thankless position of traveling minister, or missionary, to the inhabitants of Edgecombe Parish whose social condition has been indicated in a former article.

From various letters I have gathered the principal events in connection with the life of this gentleman and shall quote some of them in full, as they throw much light on the period in question.

Clement Hall writes from Edenton, July 9th, 1748: "My Brother Missionary, Mr. Moir, has been employed in Edenton Parish in this North part of the Province ever since Easter was twelve months."

Thus, it can be positively stated that James Moir entered upon his duties in the Spring of the year 1747.

As illustrative of the Age, I shall digress long enough to quote a paragraph from a speech by Governor Dobbs, in 1757, to both Houses of Assembly:

"The affairs of Europe and particularly of these Colonies are in so critical a situation that I have thought it absolutely necessary to call you together at this time, our all is at stake, our Holy Protestant Religion, our Liberties and Possessions are all now to be fought for and his Majesty and the Parliament of Britain under the great Weight of Debts and heavy Expence they must bear are obliged to exert their whole Force to secure their Liberties, Rights and Possessions and without our joining to our utmost in our own defence for our safety and in order for the future to get rid of the Neighborhood of a cruel, false and perfidious Enemy we must submit to Popish superstition and Idolatry and become Slaves to the arbitrary power of France."

Readers of history doubtless remember that England and France were at war on both sides of the Atlantic when the above speech was delivered.

Imagine the Governor of North Carolina today calling for volunteers to fight Catholic France! Or, suppose that the President of the United States had used similar language in asking the country for assistance during the Spanish-American War, what a furor of excitement would have been created throughout the civilized world!

While collecting data, I discovered a Proclamation which, though somewhat lengthy, is opportune at this moment and I crave the indulgence of my friends to leave the original subject, but, promise to return and do justice to same.

"Whereas for the enormity of our sins, the neglect of the Divine service and worship of God, and from our gross sensualities and immoralities, God Almighty has been, pleased to correct Britain and these Colonies by a heavy and dangerous war by which we are in imminent danger of losing the invaluable blessing of our Holy Religion, Liberties and Possessions: And whereas He has justly corrected these Colonies, by raising a spirit in our Indian neighbors, to invade, massacre and make prisoners the British inhabitants of these Colonies, upon their visible neglect of the original native inhabitants by neither attempting to civilize, nor convert them to our Holy Religion, and therefore God Almighty has left us more immediately to be punished by them at the instigation of our cruel and inveterate enemies the French, who, from their principles, endeavor to extirpate the Protestant Religion wherever they have Power, and have not only in these Provinces, but in Europe, formed a formidable Popish league to extirpate and ruin the Protestant interest of Europe; and whereas it appears that after a short correction of the Protestants in Germany, God Almighty has most wonderfully manifested himself in defence of the Protestant Cause in Germany, and has apparently headed their armies, by inspiring them with an invincible Courage, and conducting their Councils, and at the same time dispiriting their Popish enemies, and turning all their Councils into foolishness, so that it manifestly appears that God will not desert the Holy Protestant Religion, provided we, with humble hearts, sincerely repent of our gross sensualities and immoralities, and our shameful neglect of His Divine service and worship and serve Him and His Christ

with our whole hearts, and not with only a lip service and external worship.

Let us therefore with sincere hearts fall down before Him, and supplicate Him through the merits and satisfaction of His dear Son Christ Jesus, our only Mediator and Redeemer, to forgive us our sins, upon our sincere resolution of Amendment, and that He will avert those judgments hanging over us, accept of the punishments already poured out upon us, and leave us no longer to be corrected by our enemies, but that He will restore us to His favour, go out and lead our Armies, Fleets and Councils and inspire us with Courage to defend our Holy Religion and Civil Liberties; and to return Him the utmost praise for manifesting himself so eminently in defence of the Protestant Interest and Civil Liberties of Europe; with a lively hope and Faith that if we repent and amend that He will also manifest Himself as the God and Protector of the Protestant Cause and Liberties of Britain and of these Colonies, and implore a Blessing on His Majesty's Arms and Councils.

As therefore a day of Public Fasting and humiliation is, at this critical time, most highly necessary, I have by the advice of His Majesty's honorable Council, thought fit to issue this my Proclamation, and do hereby appoint Wednesday the seventh of June next, to be kept holy by all ranks of people within this Province, as a day of fasting and supplication; and also to give thanks to Almighty God and our Blessed Saviour Christ Jesus for having hitherto preserved this Province in Peace, in the midst of surrounding impending dangers and on account of the manifestation of his Providence, so remarkable in protecting the Protestant interest and Civil liberties of Europe from the united Popish Powers; hoping also that He will declare Himself the Protector of the Protestant Interest in America, lead our Armies and Councils and give a blessing to the Arms of his most gracious Majesty by sea and land; and that He may support our civil and religious liberties, and may vanquish and overcome our insatiable and inveterate enemies.

Therefore strictly command and require that Public Service be had in all Churches and Chapels within this Province, and that it be kept holy from all manual labour, and that this Proclamation be publickly read, either on that day or some convenient Sunday before it, to give notice to all persons within this Province, to pay a regard and obedience to it.

Given under my hand and Seal of the said Province at Newbern,

the twenth ninth day of April in the thirty first year of his Majesty's reign and in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and fifty eight.

ARTHUR DOBBS.

By His Excellency's Command, Richard Fenner Dep: Sec:
God save the King."

Political considerations were at stake and religion was of secondary importance in the formation of the "formidable Popish league," as Gov. Dobbs terms it. Anyone, familiar with the Seven Years' War in Europe, knows that through the instrumentality of Prince Kaunitz, the mighty prime minister of Empress Maria Theresa of Austria, a coalition was formed to wrest Silesia from Frederick, of Prussia; also that England and France ceased to support their respective allies before the conclusion of the war; and, as far as they were individually concerned, the victory of Wolfe at Quebec settled their struggle in favor of England.

Austria, beginning hostilities in 1756, under the most favorable auspices, was forced to make peace with Frederick the Great in 1763. All her allies had deserted her, a circumstance unfavorable to Arthur Dobbs' claim because religious wars are not carried on for worldly gain. When the will of one person shifted the immense empire of Russia from the support of Austria to her bitter enemy, Prussia, could that be called a religious consideration?

Returning to affairs in North Carolina, I shall present some of the Instructions from England to "our Trusty and well beloved Arthur Dobbs Esq., etc.:

98. You are to permit a liberty of conscience to all persons except Papists so as they be contented with a quiet and peaceable enjoyment of the same not giving scandal or offense to the Government.

99. You shall take especial care that God Almighty be devoutly and duly served throughout your Government the Book of Common Prayer as by law established read each Sunday and Holiday and the blessed Sacrament administered according to the rights of the Church of England.

100. You shall take care that the Churches already built be well and orderly kept and that more be built as the Province by God's blessing shall be improved and that besides a competent maintenance to be assigned to the Minister of each Orthodox Church

a convenient House be built at the common charge for each Minister and a competent proportion of land assigned him for a Glebe and exercise of his industry.

101. And you are to take care that the Parishes be so limited and settled as you shall find most convenient for accomplishing this good work.

102. You are not to prefer any Minister to any Ecclesiastical Benefice in that Province without certificate from the Right Reverend Father in God the Lord Bishop of London of his being conformable to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England and of a good life and conversation and if any person already preferred to a Benefice shall appear to you to give scandal either by his doctrine of manners you are to use the proper and usual means for the removal of him and to supply the vacancy in such manner as we have directed.

103. You are to give orders forthwith if the same be not already done that every Orthodox Minister within your Government be one of the Vestry in his respective Parish and that no Vestry be held without him except in case of sickness or that after notice of a Vestry he omit to come.

104. You are to enquire whether there be any Minister within your Government who preaches and administers the Sacrament in any Orthodox Church or Chapel without being in due orders and to give an account thereof to the Lord Bishop of London.

These seven are taken from a list of one hundred and thirty-three Instructions which cover all matters of importance pertaining to the Colony of North Carolina.

My motive in selecting them is to show the attitude of the authorities at that time toward religious worship and, also, to give an idea of the position and duties of orthodox ministers in the Province.

But, easy as it was to write the Instructions in England, to formulate them into satisfactory Church acts was quite another matter, because the people of North Carolina simply refused to have them executed in the parishes.

For several years of the Dobbs administration, (*) there were no vestry laws in force in the Province, and when such laws were in force the "orthodox clergy" were not necessarily benefitted thereby, being practically dependent on vestries elected by the free-

*Col. Rec., Prefatory Notes, Vol. VI, pp: xxxii-xxxiii.

holders, regardless of sect, and not required to conform to the liturgy of the Church of England.

In my Early Social Life in Edgecombe, having reproduced two letters from Mr. Moir, I shall pass over the subject matter contained therein and quote a third written in the county, April 8th, 1760, viz. "Since my last of Oct. 16, 1759, I baptized 206 white children and 3 black: on the 4th and 6th inst. there were above 50 Communicants in this Parish. For some years past this Province has been running into great disorder and confusion. Sectaries prevail in many Parishes. The last Assembly would not pass a new vestry act. There is nothing like the administration of Justice among us. A silly fellow that headed a mob against the Earl of Granville, his Land office is put into the commission of the Peace. I this day draw for my salary from Michaelmas 1759 to Lady day 1760 and am Rev. Sir etc."

The insurrection, referred to, is known as the Granville District Troubles and is of sufficient importance to constitute a complete chapter in the Colonial History of North Carolina.

Another letter, dated Oct. 30, 1760, reads as follows: "Our administration for some years past has been such, that I was loath to enter upon a detail of Public transactions.

"Governor Dobbs was so sharply censured by the general assembly in the beginning of last summer, that one would have thought, he could not be so bold as to put into the commission of the peace for Edgecombe county, another ringleader of the mob, and yet he did it; If no remedy is applied well disposed persons talk of leaving the Province.

"We have had a sickly season this fall and I was much indisposed; I baptized only 74 whites and 5 blacks, but this was chiefly occasioned by there being no vestry in the parish. This prevents the Sheriff, his being taken to task for detaining the Parish taxes, etc."

Additional evidence of the unhappy state of affairs appears the next year when Mr. Moir wrote: Edgecombe April 13, 1761, Rev. Sir, The misunderstanding between the Governor and leading men of this Province still subsisting, we are as unhappy as ever. The general assembly is now sitting and it is hoped something will be done for the more, effectual administration of Justice, the officers on the Civil list in Edgecombe county show so little regard to common honesty, that I shall embrace the offers made me by some

of the neighboring vestries which have applied to me for several years past.

Also, Edgecombe Aug. 7, 1761, Rev. Sir, Since my last of April I have baptized 108 white children and 15 black. In several places there are about 50 Communicants but never under 20. This Province is in as great confusion as ever. Some of them who laboured hard to encourage a regular ministry here, tell me they now despair of Success. I have for some years past, declared they ought to wait for better times."

James Moir, it will be observed, did not approve of the boldness of Arthur Dobbs, who acted directly contrary to the will of the people of the Colony, and, Gov. Dobbs, on his part, showed a spirit on animosity towards Mr. Moir, as will be seen later.

Apparently due to local conditions the minister moved his place of residence from Edgecombe to Northampton, from whence he on April 6, 1763, sent this interesting communication to England: Your Letter of July 16th, 1762, not coming to hand till the end of January when all the vestries of the Province were dissolved, I could not apply to any vestry of the Parishes, wherein I have or do now officiate, for a certificate of my behaviour. As there was no prospect of vestries being soon re-established I laid your complaint before the former church wardens, as I chanced to meet with them, they assured me as soon as they could conveniently meet, [they would] undeceive the venerable Society by transmitting a true account of my behaviour attested before a Justice of the Peace this they did on Good Friday, when assembled to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper and I now send it enclosed, the Rev. Dr. Beareroft signified to me several years ago that Gov. Dobbs complained against me. So that I make no doubt his being author of the Present complaint. Upon his arrival I waited on him and he soon convinced me he would act quite contrary to what was reported of him. Among other things I told him I was well assured that the deputy secretary and deputy auditor had been guilty of abominable frauds and forgeries in the King's Land office, upon which he was seized with a violent passion and I withdrew, the deputy auditor was his countryman (an Irishman G. L.) and without any other thing to recommend him, (a hard rap! G. L.) his excellency has ever since been loading him with power and dignity, he appointed him an assistant judge and has also recommended him to a seat in the council. His excellency seems to

have a natural antipathy to every one that acts uprightly in a public office, (our friend could not be much more plain spoken. G. L.) Mr. Francis Corbin, the Earl of Granville's agent in this Province, I dare say acted conscientiously, I had frequent opportunities of observing him, his excellency appointed a general assembly at Edenton to demolish the said Corbin, but his efforts proved ineffectual, the above mentioned deputy auditor publicly conntenanced the mob against the Earl of Granville's Land Office, when it was his business to suppress it, as he was Col. of the county and still is. When his excellency and the deputy auditor, with their confederates found it was impossible to get a vestry in Edgecombe that would not employ me, they divided the parish in a most ridiculous manner, and by a notorious act of injustice, threw the expenses of the two preaching years upon the Parish they expected I would settle in, only to save appearances they gave the collections of the Parish Taxes, to the said parish of Edgecombe, though they knew the taxes had not been collected by reason of the opposition they themselves had made to it, but this not having the desired effect, they divided the county after the same manner, which gave his excellency the opportunity of appointing a Sheriff in Edgecombe who managed the election of vestries in Edgecombe, so that they have had no vestry for several years and consequently no churchwardens; The Sheriff knowing that the Parish money can't be taken from but by churchwardens. It would be an endless task to enumerate all the little dirty tricks, they have used to drive me away. In short I have been so persecuted by the Governor and his accomplices, that I have several times laid down my office, with a resolution to settle in Virginia, but have been diverted from it even after I was on the road, by the importunities of the people and were it not to oblige them, they are so fond of me, I would not stay one day in the Province, where fraud, injustice and oppression are triumphant; if Gov. Dobbs complains against me for great misbehaviour, why did not he take the law of me? (an excellent point G. L.) he never can have greater advantages this way. I have told two Chief Justices to their Faces, how grossly they misbehaved in suits, for the recovery of Parish Taxes from Sheriffs who had squandered them away, when the captain of the above mob being put into the commission of the peace stood condidate at an election of Burgesses in Edgecombe, wit hall the influence of the Governor's Faction in these parts and had got the huzzah on his side; I painted the scoundrel in his proper colors

and overset his election, 'tis true he came up to me with his myrmidons and began to chatter, but I soon stopt his mouth by telling him I was ready to prove again, what I had charged him with. I have been offered as good security as I could desire for the payment of my salaries here, if I would cease inspecting the vestry accounts and rejected it with indignation: after these and maybe such instances, no wonder the tools of Power should look on me with an evil eye; But all the ill natured ridiculous stories they invent made no impression on the people, who when they have a chance vote in such vestrymen, as they think will employ me. Is it to be supposed that the people think I neglect my duty when they have several times offered me a better maintenance by subscription, than I had on the Establishment; In the Parish of St. Geo. N. Hampton where I reside, there is a church and three chapels. There are two places besides, where I preach now and then on a week day. I officiate monthly by subscription in Bertie county on week days and have thrice administered there last year. I have also officiated in Hertford county, etc."

Another from N. Hampton, Oct. 20, 1763, Rev. Sir: "Since my last of April, at the earnest request of the people of Edgecombe (there being no vestry in the Province) I officiated in that Parish in the months of May and July and baptized 283 white and 6 black children. Before the expiration of my year in N. Hampton the Parishioners insisted on my continuing to officiate among them, and assured me that they would give me full satisfaction either by subscription or by voting in a vestry to do it by the first opportunity, to which I consented and have baptized in this and the neighboring counties of Bertie and Hertford 238 white and 56 black children, the communicants are often from 10 to 30, and seldom above 30 as I administer the Sacrament in the different Chapels and sometimes in private houses when the Church and Chapels are inconvenient to the aged and infirm.

The general assembly of this Province is to meet next december, some members of my acquaintance desire me to be there promising to use their utmost efforts to encourage a regular ministry as the only effectual means to stop the inundation of Sectaries, which are chiefly owing to the vestry acts, the generality of the inhabitants being much inclined to the offices of our Church, but I have little hopes of Success, having often represented among others the incon-

venience of one and the same persons collecting the Parish taxes, and taking the Poll at the election of vestries.

My salaries in Edgecombe for the last three years I officiated there are still due. Gov. Dobbs taking the advantage at the division of the county to appoint a Sheriff who managed the election of vestries so, as that the Parish had no vestry for several years before the repeal of the last vestry act, to prevent being sued for the money in his hands. The Parishioners are sensible of the injustice done me and resolve to choose a vestry that will oblige the Sheriff to refund. They also importune me to reside in their Parish. I have not drawn for my salary this last year, hoping the venerable society will give me leave to come to London next Summer. I am etc."

Since there are two sides to every disagreement, I shall now present an extract from a communication of Gov. Dobbs to the "Rev. Sir" in England:—March 29, 1764—I have had no letter from you since July 16, 1762, in answer to mine of the foregoing March, it will therefore be proper to return thanks to the Honorable Society for the acceptance of my good wishes and inclinations to support the true apostolic Protestant Religion in this Province and to reform the morals of the ill instructed inhabitants and further to thank them for their pious zeal and due attention to promote true religion and the reformation of their manners by Procuring more pious clergymen and missionaries (remember this G. L.) to come over and reside in this Province. The situation of affairs relating to the Church is somewhat different to what it was when I wrote last, Mr. McDowell the Missionary of this Parish (Cape Fear, Brunswick, place of writing letter G. L.) died last November of a lingering disorder, which has deprived us of a clergyman; and Mr. Teal who I recommended last year to be put into orders finding upon his return that the parishioners of Wilmington in New Hanover county were divided; he thought he could be of no service and went to South Carolina where he was immediately inducted into a vacant Parish and is fixed happily there. We have therefore only at present six clergymen in the Province, four of which perform their duty diligently in the towns of Edenton, Bath, New Bern and Halifax: the three first being missionaries, the other two Mr. Moir and Miller, by all I can hear, do not behave as clergymen ought. (The Governor now has his say G. L.) Mr. Moir who lives at a distance from me as I am informed by Gentlemen who live in the

neighborhood, has no parish performs very little casual service; he has been endeavoring to secure a certificate of his good character, but I am informed with very bad success from any men of rank or character, he lives upon a plantation penuriously and inhospitably; and lays out his salary as missionary in England to retire to and live upon when he loses his support as missionary; his character as I am informed is to stir up and make divisions in the neighborhood instead of Promoting Peace and love; having observed that he made a return to the Society of great numbers of negroes and others baptized by him, I enquired into it and was informed by gentlemen in his neighborhood that they never heard of any number baptized by him, etc."

From Northampton, April 4, 1764, James Moir, after reciting the numbers of those he had baptized at various times, informs the Secretary of additional grievances. He states in a later communication how he tried to obtain redress for certain wrongs and continues: "During these transactions I had some conferences with his excellency, but could never discover in him any regard to truth or equity, and had it not been for a member of the Council I should have publicly exposed him for one of his notorious falsehoods, the two gentlemen he gave for his authors, declaring to me they would go along with me and tell him to his face they never told him such a thing nor never heard of it. His administration is almost universally hated and despised etc." Written in October 1764.

In the following year Governor Tryon, who succeeded Arthur Dobbs writes of James Moir: "I do not represent him as an immoral man, but should think it advisable, he might be fixed to some parish etc."

The above explicit statement occurs in a letter, dated July 31, 1765 and, written by Tryon to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign parts.

The same year our Missionary informs the Secretary: "I have not been able to procure a copy of the Church Bill that was passed last assembly. Governor Tryon, though a soldier, has done more for the settlement of a regular ministry in this province than both his learned Predecessors and yet was not importuned to—it here, as I know they both were etc."

Moir's final letter was written from Suffolk, Virginia, October 13, 1766: "Upon finding last November that my bad state of health

would not permit me to discharge the Functions of my office in Northampton County I desired the Vestry to employ another * * * * in April last I was importuned to serve in St. Mary's Parish Edgecombe County (where I had been many years) * * * * but was not then in a condition to ride the Circuit of so large a Parish as I had done, and that for the recovery of my health was under the necessity of spending the hot season in Great Britain or the Northern Colonies and that I could come to no Resolution till I returned in May and set out for New York and towards the end of July arrived in Boston where I got rid in a few days of what afflicted me most * * * * About the middle of August it was extremely hot in the City and I had some slight fits of intermitting fever which brought the bleeding of the nose upon me, and being told that Rhode Island was healthy I went thither and in ten days was perfectly recovered; after I had been there five weeks and proposed to return by way of Philadelphia I unluckily sprained my back by trying to save myself from a fall out of a chair.

As soon as I was able to walk I went aboard the Packet Boat for New York and stayed there a Fortnight hoping to be able to endure the Motion of a Horse or Chair but finding I could not even walk without great pain I took a passage for Suffolk in Virginia. I have been there days and flatter myself I shall be able to mount a horse in a short time. It gave me great joy in the Northern Colonies to hear and see our Clergymen were so regular and diligent and therefore much esteemed by their people and shall always acknowledge myself much indebted for the kind Reception and usage I had from both. I do not draw for my salary being apprehensive I must leave North Carolina and sail for Great Britain in the Spring. My constitution is so crazy that I despair of being in a condition to officiate in such large Parishes."

Governor Tryon, in one sentence, shows that at the end Mr. Moir was upheld by his superiors in England, viz: "The Rev. Mr. Thomas (should be James G. L.) Moir's death in February last (1767) defeated the Society's direction to have him fixed in some parish."

Edgecombe Changes Her County Seat

On the 8th of December, Saturday, 1759, a petition of the Principal parts of the Freeholders and Inhabitants of Edgecombe County was presented to the Colonial Legislative Body—"Setting forth that through mismanagement and a Secret and Clandestine Manner an Act was passed last Session of Assembly to fix the Courthouse of the said County at Redman's old field on Tyoncocoa which is found to be near the verge of said County and Inconvenient to the Inhabitants to attend the said County Courts Praying Relief etc."

Until the formation of Halifax County in 1758, from Edgecombe, Enfield was the capital, or county seat, but, this town now being located in another county, it became necessary for the inhabitants of Edgecombe to determine upon a suitable location for the court house.

Meanwhile, the town of Halifax, (†) became the place for holding court for the inhabitants of Edgecombe, Granville, and Northampton.

It may have been in the minds of the founders of Tarboro that their town would become the county seat but, whether this was so, or otherwise, I do not find positive evidence and shall leave the decision to the individual judgments of my readers.

In the fall of 1760, the General Assembly passed an "Act for Establishing a town on the Lands of Joseph Howell on Tar River."

On Tuesday, April 20th, 1762, was presented to the House "a Petition of Sundry of the Inhabitants of Edgecombe County setting forth that the place appointed for Building a Court House, Prison and Stocks, etc. at Redman's old Field on Tyoncoca, is an obscure place, and greatly inconvenient for the inhabitants to meet, and Transact the Public Business of the said County, Praying an act may pass to direct the Buildings aforementioned at Tarborough."

The next step was a "Bill for Ascentaining a proper place for Building thereat a Court House, Prison, Pillory and Stocks in Edgecombe County."

†Martin, vol. II p. 95.

This Bill was rejected by the Governor and the long routine of three readings in each branch of the Legislature had to be gone over again, augmented by petitions viz:

"Mr. Howell presented the petition (16th November 1762) of several of the Inhabitants of Edgecombe County complaining that the place called Redman's old Field is a very improper place to hold thereat the Court of the said County praying a law may pass to appoint a Court House to be Built in the Town of Tarborough for holding thereat the Court for the said County."

Mr. Ruffin, the other member from Edgecombe, also presented a petition in practically the same language, and then it was ordered that Mr. Howell prepare and bring in a Bill for fixing a place within the said County for holding thereat the said Court.

It was not until Friday, March 9th, 1764, that his Excellency was pleased to give his Assent to "An act for Ascertaining a proper place, for building thereat, a Court House, Clerk's Office, Prison and Stocks for the County of Edgecombe."

Tarboro was finally selected as the most convenient place for transacting the Public Business of the County, but Mr. Joseph Howell, the member most interested, had to make a hard fight.

He had no trouble in getting his town incorporated, but it required some years of patience and hard work before he succeeded in making Tarboro, the capital.

In 1761 a "Bill to Encourage Joseph Howell to build a Bridge over Tar River at or near the place called Howell's Ferry at Tarborough in Edgecombe County" was rejected, but Messrs. Ruffin and Howell brought their united influence to bear upon the Solons, and the following year they triumphed.

Another Bill, of interest to Tarboreans, was one that passed without any delay, viz:

"A Bill for Enlarging the time for Inspection of Tobacco, at the Public Ware House in the Town of Tarborough in the County of Edgecombe and for Encreasing the Salaries of the Inspectors thereof." (Anno Domini, 1761.)

Edgecombe was represented by Messrs. William Haywood and Duncan Lemon in 1761, and by Messrs. William Haywood and Joseph Howell in 1762.

Germantown, Pennsylvania

When George Washington led the Continentals against the redcoats on October 4th, 1777, a goodly number of his troops hailed from North Carolina. General Francis Nash, who was mortally wounded during the battle, commanded the Tarheel regiments. The American forces would have won a complete victory, if two sections of the army had not mistaken each other for the enemy. Notwithstanding the fact that the British regulars were retreating and that a state of demoralization was fast coming over the redcoats, a grievous mistake changed Continental success into defeat.

To lose the fight would have been bitter enough but the Commander-in-Chief suffered additional sadness for he lost one of his bravest officers. An illustrious company surrounded Washington on the eve of the battle of Germantown. What memories are awakened by the names of Greene, Pulaski, Nash, Wayne, Marshall, Hamilton, Pickering, and Lee! A few days later the body of the gallant North Carolinean rested in a cemetery nearby. Full military honors were accorded the deceased and the funeral of Francis Nash lived lastingly in the minds of those present.

Writers have preserved many details connected with the wounding and death of the North Carolina Brigadier General. His blood was said to have soaked through two feather beds, so profusely did he bleed. To his memory and to the memory of other Revolutionary officers buried beside him, a monument stands today in the burying ground at Kulpsville. The inscription thereon has been copied by Dr. Naaman H. Keyser and incorporated into the history of Germantown.

Not only do the names of the people, but the appearance of the old main thoroughfare suggest a German settlement. The mere mention of feather beds gives Teutonic flavor to a narrative. Philadelphia has reached out and made a suburb of what was once a thriving town six miles distant. The German and Dutch settlers worked industriously in their days and some of them used to carry their wares to Philadelphia where they were peddled on the street.

While in Atlantic City (September, 1910), I conceived the idea of stopping over at Germantown, on my way back to Richmond,

in order to see whether the place offered any thing of direct interest to Edgecombe County. It will be remembered that Henry Irwin, a merchant of Tarboro, was killed during the battle in and about the village. Due to the kindness of Miss Florence Uhler, a resident of Germantown who instructed me how to reach my destination easily and quickly, I was saved much time and needless worry. After arrival upon the ground, I found intelligent looking people ignorant of their own historical treasures; however, their lack of knowledge is not exceptional. All over the world tourists find that residents know less about the fame of their communities than strangers.

It was easy for me to remember Upsal, the name of the station where I was to get off the train. Not only did the word remind me of Upsala, the university city a few miles from Stockholm and the burial place of Gustavus Vasa, but I am inclined to believe that a Swede is responsible for its original appearance in Germantown. Across the State of New Jersey without a stop, an express carried me from Atlantic City to North Philadelphia. Thence I transferred to an accommodation, which made the run to Upsal in a short time, including stops in the newer portion of the suburb.

Modern Germantown is very attractive. The residents enjoy the advantages of country life, with its abundance of trees and foliage. Many of the houses of the well to do stand in the midst of beautiful lawns and the occupants, who spend the day in the hot city of Philadelphia amidst congested traffic, can return in the evening to the luxuries of fresh air and freedom. Smoothly paved streets eliminate the mud nuisance one is compelled to put up with so often in a suburban community.

But we are now concerned with the old settlement. The inhabitants of the Colonial period and Revolutionary era were stretched out for a mile and a half, chiefly on both sides of what is known as Germantown Avenue. Although attempts to straighten it have met with a certain degree of success, the thoroughfare still retains its sinuous appearance. Some think the street is crooked because it follows an old Indian trail, but my acquaintance with medieval European cities leads me to the conclusion that the settlers played a part in the "laying out" of the road.

By accident my first step upon this main thoroughfare was taken almost opposite to the cemetery, in which Henry Irwin is buried. Having crossed the street to read the inscription, placed upon the

stone wall by the Site and Relic Society, I found that the name of Edgecombe's martyr to the cause of liberty led all the rest. Close beside the graveyard stands the Concord Schoolhouse, where, in 1853, the Junior Order of United American Mechanics is said to have been organized. Watson, the annalist of Philadelphia, three generations ago, placed a slab over the spot where Henry Irwin and several compatriots rest. The bodies had been taken from the battlefield and deposited together. Watson's act was a pure labor of love, since he erected the marble memorial to preserve for posterity the place of interment of Revolutionary officers whose memory had been neglected and whom neglect may have consigned to oblivion.

Feeling that the Site and Relic Society could supply me with information of value, I proceeded to look for their headquarters. While walking along Germantown Avenue towards Vernon Park, whither certain questionees directed me, I was struck with the architecture of the residences and was not surprised, therefore, to read afterwards that this old main road has the distinction of being perhaps the most quaint street in the United States.

Although the Site and Relic Society maintains a highly creditable museum in Vernon Park, not far from the Germantown branch of the Free Public Library of Philadelphia, there were persons on the historic thoroughfare who not only knew nothing of its existence, but they told me that they had never heard of the above organization. The custodian of the museum received me pleasantly enough. He guarded numerous objects of general interest, and, under favorable conditions, a lengthy stay in the building would doubtless have been made. Since he was unable to help me, I asked for the names and addresses of the officials of the society. Fortunately Dr. Naaman H. Keyser was at home.

Dr. Keyser's ancestors settled at Germantown during the early period of its history. Watson refers to them in his annals. Wishing to perpetuate the past life of the community, Naaman H. Keyser has collected a large store of data. His book is a standard work on the subject with which it deals. Having noticed in the inscription, mentioned above in connection with Henry Irwin, that the Site and Relic Society styled the Edgecombe officer as major, I told the doctor this was a mistake. He immediately confessed that his fellow-workers had done worse.

This very inscription contains a legend of a gift. As a matter of fact, my informant told me that the cemetery was not presented to the community by a certain Mr. Wolf, but that the land was obtained by purchase. Thus we cannot believe everything we read. Watson's Annals tells of Major Irvine (note the spelling), whence the local society probably extracted their information, and reduced our lieutenant-colonel to the rank of major. Being well supplied with literature, Dr. Keyser handed me a copy of the guide book to Germantown. This recent publication has corrected Watson's error, and I hope that Dr. Keyser will change the inscription accordingly on the stone wall.

The North Carolina State Records, compiled by the Hon. Walter Clark, contain letters written a short while after the battle of Germantown. Herein are reports that Henry Irwin was taken prisoner. I have seen the statement also that his body was not recovered. But, unless there is positive proof to the contrary, we should take Watson's word and hold sacred the little plot of ground upon which stands a memorial to the brave North Carolinians who rest in one grave as they fought side by side in one cause.

May their memory never be forgotten!

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